

The present thesis follows the distinction made by Hannah Arendt between the life of the mind and *vita activa*. In her earlier writings, Arendt presents acting in concert as a supreme human possibility. The devaluation of active life in the Western tradition is seen as related to the subordination of the experience of action to the experience of thought, which presupposes a turning away from the world of phenomena and plurality. With respect to the ability to act, Arendt understands thought as marginal or even detrimental. On this note, she contrasts thought with opinion, a specifically political attitude bound to the experience of action and plurality. Following the process with Eichmann, however, this image saw a revision. With the collapse of the public sphere, the dependence of the ability to tell right from wrong on the activity of thought became more prominent. Subsequent considerations therefore shift to the sphere of the mind. In the light of the corpus of Arendt's works, the present thesis enquires into the nature of mental acts required for adequate action. The first part presents political thought within the situation of plurality. The second part takes into account the collapse of the public sphere and deals with the uneasy relationship between thought and the ability to relate to the common world (i.e. judgment). The third part deals with judgment and provides an interpretation of Arendt's understanding of political judgment as reserved to an impartial spectator.